

News Release

PRESS OFFICE

Connecticut District Office
330 Main Street 2nd. Floor
Hartford, CT 06106-1800
Tel. (860) 240-4700
Website: www.sba.gov/ct

Contact: Hugh Curley
Public Affairs Specialist
Tel: (860) 240-4650
Fax: (860) 240-4659
Email: Hugh.Curley@sba.gov

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SBA HONORS CONNECTICUT'S TOP LENDERS DURING ANNUAL EAGLE AWARDS PRESENTATION

Rocky Hill, CT -- After completing a record year of performance in providing capital access to Connecticut's Small Business community, the Connecticut District Office of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) recognized Connecticut's leading SBA Small Business Lenders at their Annual SBA Eagle Awards Meeting in Rocky Hill, CT.

Bernard M. Sweeney, Director of SBA's Connecticut District Office announced "the completion of Fiscal Year 2005 on September 30th marked the SBA's most vibrant year in Connecticut. In 2005, through hard work of our lending partners the SBA was able to assist in over 1,630 loans to small business owners in our state." Also in attendance was guest speaker Marie O'Brien, President of the Connecticut Development Authority, the "State's business lending arm" and SBA Regional Administrator Charles Summers.

The Eagle Awards are our way of recognizing the outstanding efforts of both large and small lenders who have made a significant and very positive impact on the small businesses" added Charles Summers, Regional Administrator of the SBA.

This year's 2005 *SBA Eagle Award* Winners are as follows:

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| 1. Top Volume Lender; Top Lender, Target Markets | - | Citizens Bank |
| 2. Top 504 CLP Participant | - | Webster Bank |
| 3. Top Dollar 7(a) Lender | - | CIT Small Business Lending Corp |
| 4. Largest Growth – 7(a) Lending | - | Sovereign Bank |
| 5. Fastest Growing 7(a) Express Lender | - | Newtown Savings Bank |
| 6. Largest Growth – 504 Participation | - | NewMil Bank |
| 7. Top CDC Lender; Top Micro Lender | - | CTCIC |

Over 100 Connecticut lenders participate in the SBA loan programs. SBA holds four quarterly meetings throughout the year to update the lenders on programs and services provided by the SBA and Connecticut District. For more information on SBA lending, call (860) 240-4700 or visit SBA on the Internet at www.sba.gov/ct.